

Inside out

Pages 8-10

*Admiral says
sailors are
valued*

Pages 11-13

*Cabañas 2000
culminates in
Argentina*

Pages 14-17

*MIAs and POWs
get their due on
recognition day*

General Pace takes command



See pages 2-7

The
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Pace takes command – pledges to help democracy, prosperity, freedom grow

By Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts, USAF

U.S. Southern Command
Public Affairs

MIAMI – Marine Gen. Peter Pace took command of the U.S. Southern Command here Sept. 8 pledging to cooperate with partner nations in Latin America and the Caribbean to ensure that democ-



racy, prosperity and freedom continue to grow strong roots in the hemisphere.

In front of hundreds of military and civilian guests, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen passed the reigns of command to Pace from Marine Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, who culminates his command and 37-year

See **Pace**

Page 3

Pace

from Page 2

military career.

Pace, 54, assumes responsibility of U.S. military operations in the command's area of responsibility, which includes 32 nations spanning 12.1 million square miles, from Latin America, the Caribbean Sea and island nations, the Gulf of Mexico, and portions of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

With command personnel, local community leaders, civilian and military dignitaries from Latin America and the Caribbean

see Pace
Page 4



Photo by Army Spc. Lucy J. Pabon

Gen. Peter Pace (Left) receives the U.S. Southern Command Flag from Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen Sept. 8 symbolizing the general's acceptance of command.

Pace

from Page 3

present, Pace publicly thanked the secretary of defense for his trust and confidence in selecting him for command. "I understand the enormity of the mission you have given me. I will not betray your trust sir," Pace promised Cohen.

Pace also addressed the command, calling it a great honor and privilege to become commander in chief. The general announced he would not ask anyone in the command to run faster or jump higher. "I am simply going to ask you to continue to do what you have always done, to meet every challenge head on."



Photo by Tom Pattison

Gen. Peter Pace addresses members of the U.S. Southern Command and friends, family and guests after taking command Sept. 8 at the command's headquarters. Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen and former commander in chief Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm listen.

Cohen, who was joined by wife Janet, welcomed Pace and his wife Lynne to Miami. He recalled how he knew the general from his previous service on the

Joint Staff and in Norfolk, and then declared the "straight-talking soldier-of-the-sea" ready for his new post. "He is a man of extraordinary ability, with the skill, experience, and judgment to carry on the critical work of this command," said Cohen.

In saying farewell to the Wilhelms, Cohen presented the general the Defense Distinguished Service Medal and his wife Valerie the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Award for Distinguished Public Service. The secretary of defense praised them and described them as "great" public servants. "Their ex-

See **Pace**
Page 5

Pace*from Page 4*

traordinary partnership has flourished through more than three decades of service and sacrifice – living in some 28 different houses in 33 years,” Cohen said.

Cohen specifically recognized Wilhelm for his leadership, loyalty, commitment, and for overseeing the nation’s security interests with “tactical skill and strategic genius.” The secretary said the general “forged deeper bonds with the democracies



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

Gen. Peter Pace receives his four-star flag Sept. 8 from Marine Commandant Gen. James L. Jones following the change of command ceremony at the U.S. Southern Command headquarters in Miami.

of this hemisphere; and, brought help in the wake of natural disasters such as Hurricane Mitch.”

At the same time, Cohen said, Wilhelm faced one of the most daunting challenges the region

has to overcome – the surge of narcotics. During the general’s tenure, he not only stemmed the flow of illegal drugs into America, he was a strong advocate of Plan Colombia, a \$1.3 billion aid package to assist the government of Colombia with its campaign against drug trafficking.

Also, in his three years as commander in chief, Wilhelm led the implementation of the Panama Canal treaties and brought the command to Miami. He also brokered an end to the long-standing



Photo/Spc. Lucy J. Pabon
Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen speaks at the U.S. change of command ceremony.

border conflict between Peru and Ecuador, and the

See Pace
Page 6



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen (Left), Gen. Peter Pace (Middle), U.S. Southern Command commander in chief, and Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, former commander in chief, each receive a howitzer shell casing from members of the 10th Marine Regimental Firing Battery from Camp Lejeune, N.C., during the change of command ceremony Sept. 8 at the headquarters in Miami.

Pace *from Page 5*

achievements made by the Military Observer Mission under the auspices of the Rio Treaty. In addition, he directed the massive military assistance to countries in the Caribbean in the aftermath of Hurricane Georges, and redeployed troops from Haiti.

During the ceremony, Wilhelm thanked Cohen for his kind and generous tribute to him and his wife Valerie. "Your words touched me deeply, coming as they do from a man

who I respect and admire greatly," he said. "We've done our best. We take satisfaction from knowing that our best has been good enough," the general said.

Wilhelm added that relinquishing command is never easy, but with a worthy successor like Pace, a lot of the pain goes away knowing the new commander in chief will treasure, nurture and care for the command just as fervently.

Pace, who arrived in Miami a

See Pace
Page 7



(Left) Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen presents Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm the Defense Distinguished Service Medal. (Right) Cohen presents Valerie Wilhelm the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Award for Distinguished Public Service.



Pace from Page 6

three-star general, received his fourth star shortly before the change of command ceremony from Marine Commandant Gen. James L.

Jones. Pace's wife Lynne assisted, and the general's children were present for the promotion.

Previously, Pace commanded 92,000 Marines and sailors as the commander, U.S. Marine Corps

Forces, Atlantic; commanding general, Fleet Marine Forces, Atlantic; commander, Marine Corps Bases, Atlantic; commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe; commanding general, Fleet

Marine Forces Europe, and commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces South in Miami.

The general was born Nov. 5, 1945 in Brooklyn, N.Y., and raised in Teaneck, N.J. He was commis-

sioned in June 1967 following graduation from the United States Naval Academy and holds a master's degree in Business Administration from George Washington University (1972).

Admiral sends clear signal to sailors -- 'you are valued'



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts
Navy Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., addresses sailors' issues during an All Hands meeting at the U.S. Southern Command Aug. 29.

By Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts, USAF
U.S. Southern Command Public Affairs

MIAMI – The Navy's top manpower and personnel officer visited with sailors at the U.S. Southern Command Headquarters here Aug. 29. He focused on recruiting, retention and attrition issues, but also made it very clear that in the Navy – “you are valued.”

Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., chief of Naval Personnel and deputy chief of Naval Operations, Manpower and Personnel, in Washington D.C., said he wants men and women in the fleet who have proven their worth to know the Navy will “do almost anything to get and keep good people.”

In fact, Ryan pointed out, in the last year the Department of Defense has improved base pay, while the Navy has increased advancement

opportunities, offered increased selective reenlistment bonus payments for critical career fields, and fought for a thrift savings plan, which is similar to a civilian 401K plan. In addition, the Navy detailers are trying to be more flexible when helping people with career and assignment choices, he said.

The admiral told the SOUTHCOM sailors that the Navy is competing with a strong economy and with civilian employers to retain the best people in the fleet. “The Navy is in a war for talent,” Ryan stressed. So the Navy is trying harder than ever to help sailors achieve career goals, while also improving quality of life. In return, he added, the Navy hopes its officers

See Ryan
Page 9

Ryan

from Page 8

and enlisted members will not only feel good about serving their country, but also will feel confident that they are getting a “fair shake” from the Navy when addressing career goals, personal concerns, and other quality of life issues.

“Adm. Vern Clark, our new chief of Naval Operations, is focused solely on people,” Ryan said. “Why people? Because he is most concerned about the fleet and readiness. He said it doesn’t matter what equipment you have if you don’t have the people coming into the Navy and staying in the Navy.”



Photos by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., explains Navy issues to sailors at a U.S. Southern Command All Hands call.

Statistics show the Navy’s personnel shortages are apparently improving with the Navy’s new focus on people. Two years ago, the admiral said, there were 18,000 shortages of

bunks at sea, billets that weren’t filled. That same year the Navy missed its recruiting goal by 7,000 people. The Navy also had attrition problems. Today, the Navy has met its re-

cruiting goals for 23 months straight. First term retention is up this year by 2.5 percent, second term reenlistment is up 4 percent, and career retention is up 7 percent.

“That means we have thousands more young men and women with experience and critical skills staying in the Navy,” Ryan said. “The good news is we don’t have 18,000 to 19,000 gaps in Navy personnel at sea. But we do still have a 10,000 to 11,000 gap... about 6,000 at sea and 6,000 at shore. So we still don’t have enough people. We need to keep working at it and do a better job as

See Ryan
Page 10

Ryan

from Page 9

we get more people in through recruiting and as we are able to retain more people.”

Ryan said he plans to begin spending less of the budget pie on recruiting and more on retention so he can afford to promote more of the Navy’s proven performers. Using a baseball analogy, the admiral said, “If you have a salary cap for a team you have to spend a certain amount of it to get your new draftees... the kids coming out of



Photos by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

Vice Adm. Norbert R. Ryan Jr., pledged to work on the issues that concern sailors, which are his customers.

high school. But you don’t want to spend all of your money on unproved performers. What you want to do is keep the nucleus of your talent, your proven performers. That’s what

I want to do in the Navy... start spending more of our money under the salary cap on the proven performers and just enough to bring new folks in. We need those new folks and we’re going to have to spend money on them.”

In summing up, Ryan pledged to continue working on the issues that concern sailors, the customers. “We’ve got to make sure that we’re trying to send a signal that you are valued,” he said. “We’ve got to do a better job on that.”

Cabañas 2000 ends with round-the-clock training



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Gabe Puello

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Tom Krell, 7th Special Forces Group and combined situational training exercise instructor, points out possible mine locations to members of Bravo Company during United Nations peacekeeping training in Cordoba, Argentina during Cabañas 2000.

CORDOBA, Argentina – Cabañas 2000, a U.S. Southern Command sponsored multinational peacekeeping exercise involving civilian and military agencies from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and the United States, kicked off here Sept. 6.

The exercise culminated Sept. 20 following four days of round-the-clock training designed to prepare these seven Latin American nations and the U.S. in 33 specific United Nations approved peacekeeping opera-

tion taskings. U.S. Special Forces personnel on the coalition training teams, U.N. evaluators from Argentina's long-standing peacekeeping program, civilian representatives from the International Red Cross, Congressional Hunger Center and Partners in Health evaluated the training.

In the exercise, more than 1,000 peacekeepers were thrust into the middle of a bloody squabble between two fictitious na-

See Cabañas
Page 12

Cabañas

from Page 11

tions. In the fictitious scenario, the Islamic Republic of Sudistan and Free Sudistan Federation have split their country into two regions and sporadic fighting continues.

The mission of the peacekeepers was to supervise a cease-fire, guarantee ethnic and religious freedom, allow refugees to return home, and monitor human rights across a buffer zone carved out of the non-existent countryside. This all



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Gabe Puello

The 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group, Mississippi National Guard; and 7th Special Forces Group, jump from a C-130 Hercules during Cabañas 2000.

took place along Argentina's 4th Parachute Brigade resides and maintains Cordoba, where a soft landing zone

and training area.

Once in the training buffer zone, U.N. evaluators and Special Forces instructors threw a wide array of scenarios at the trainees. The military and civilian role players acted as angry mobs, fleeing refugees, and potential guerrillas creating civil unrest in mock villages, similar to a Hollywood backlot. This allowed the trainees to learn how to cope with all manner of situations, while adhering to the United Nations guidelines.

Of course neither of the two fictional

countries exist, however the similarity between this scenario and situations evolving today around the globe fuels the need for this situational training exercise.

"Our soldiers have done an excellent job of bringing all these nations together and enabling them to train as a coalition type force. I think when they leave here, we'll have eight nations more capable of conducting peacekeeping operations," said Brig. Gen. Frank J. Toney,

See Cabañas
Page 13

Cabañas

from Page 12

commanding general, U.S. Army Special Forces Command, Fort Bragg, N.C.

The next time a flare up requiring U.N. peacekeepers arises, these soldiers will most likely be called upon to accomplish that mission.

Officials believe the extensive training and evaluation these soldiers have received during Cabañas 2000 will give them the necessary tools needed to maintain peace and cope with problems when peace-keeping.



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Gabe Puello

Chilean soldiers receive training in emergency medical evacuations during Cabañas 2000 in Cordoba, Argentina.

Command remembers MIAs, recognizes former POWs

By Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts, USAF
U.S. Southern Command Public Affairs

MIAMI – The U.S. Southern Command's chief of staff hosted a POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony here Sept. 15. Everyone present remembered the nation's 1,817 MIAs still unaccounted for, and recognized the sacrifices of America's POWs.

Brig. Gen. Jerry C. McAbee addressed the audience and welcomed one World War II, one Korean War and two Vietnam War POWs who were honored guests at the event.

McAbee first introduced retired Navy Rear Adm. Jeremiah Denton, a Vietnam POW and former U.S. Senator from Alabama. A 34-year



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts

Brig. Gen. Jerry A. McAbee (Center), U.S. Southern Command chief of staff, welcomes former World War II POW Harold Sauer (Left), Vietnam POW retired Navy Rear Adm. Jeremiah Denton (Second from left), Vietnam POW retired Army Col. Floyd J. Thompson (Second from right) and Korean War POW Gene Tumbleston to the command's POW/MIA Recognition Day .

See POW/MIA
Page 15

POW/MIA

from Page 14

veteran, the admiral was shot down over North Vietnam on July 18, 1965 and captured. He spent the

next seven years and seven months in captivity.

The general also introduced retired Army Col. Floyd J. Thompson, a highly decorated veteran and POW of the Vietnam War. Referred as the "Old

Man of the South," Thompson spent nearly nine full years in captivity, making him the longest-held American POW in the nation's history.

McAbee also welcomed Mr. Harold Sauer, a World War II veteran and POW. As an Army private first class, Sauer was taken prisoner on Oct. 22, 1944 while serving as a combat medic in the European Theater of Operations. He later escaped from his German captors on March 29, 1945 while being transferred from one Nazi camp to another.

Finally, the general introduced Mr. Gene Tumbleston, a veteran and POW during the Korean War. Tumbleston, an Army



Photos by Navy Lt. j.g. Frank Kostenko

Members of the U.S. Southern Command welcome four former prisoners of war to the headquarters Sept. 15.



Navy Rear Adm. Jeremiah Denton, a Vietnam POW and former U.S. Senator from Alabama, thanks U.S. Southern Command personnel for honoring the former POWs in attendance.

sergeant, was taken prisoner on Nov. 5, 1950 at Unsan, North Korea. He

See **POW/MIA**
Page 16



Photos by Navy Lt. j.g. Frank Kostenko

Harold Sauer speaks at the event. He was a private first class when he was taken prisoner on Oct. 22, 1944 while serving as a combat medic in the European Theater of Operations during World War II.

POW/MIA *from Page 15*

was released from his captors in mid-August 1953.

In paying tribute to these men the general said, "No group of people in our country better represent the American core

values of honor, courage, commitment, patriotism and selflessness than our POWs."

McAbee said his earliest recollections of POWs occurred on Feb. 12, 1973 when he was a young second lieutenant. "That was the day the U.S. Air Force plane left Hanoi (Vietnam) and landed at Clark Air Base, Philippines," he explained. "And as a young lieutenant I can remember still to this day watching on TV the plane coming to a halt, the doors opening and POWs leaving the aircraft."



Gene Tumbleston thanks everyone for their patriotism. He was a veteran and POW during the Korean War. As an Army sergeant, he was taken prisoner on Nov. 5, 1950 at Unsan, North Korea. He spent his 20th, 21st and 22nd birthdays in captivity.

The senior officer aboard the aircraft that day approached the microphone, McAbee continued. "What he said was

simple but eloquent and had a profound impression on me.

See POW/MIA
Page 17

POW/MIA

from Page 16

What that officer said was, 'We are honored to have had the opportunity to serve our country under difficult circumstances. We are profoundly grateful to our commander in chief and to our nation for this day. God Bless America.'"

McAbee then announced that the officer who spoke those words was Admiral Denton, one of the honored POWs present at the ceremony.

In summing up, McAbee said it is fitting and proper that everyone ask themselves what POW/MIA Recognition Day means to them. The answer to that question will vary, the general said, "but to me it means the world will never be completely safe. Freedom will always require a sacrifice. Freedom my friends is never free."



Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts
Air Force Maj. Aundra L. Moore (Left), J-1 Manpower and Personnel Directorate, asks Vietnam War POW retired Army Col. Floyd J. Thompson for his autograph following the U.S. Southern Command POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony Sept. 15, 2000 at the headquarters in Miami. Thompson is the longest-held American POW in the nation's history.

Each of the POWs present then accepted an invitation to address the audience.

Sauer said he didn't want to dwell on what he went through in captivity, but did say he was proud and happy to be honored at the ceremony. "When I get home and think it over I will cry," he said. "You can't help but cry when you are treated like this by people... your peers."

Tumbleston added that over the years he had never been so moved. "I just thank God that there are some people who feel for us because patriotism seems so very rare anymore," he said.

Admiral Denton thanked McAbee and command members in attendance for having such a marvelous ceremony.

Agreeing with Tumbleston, Denton said patriotism isn't spread around as it used to be. But, he said, it is certainly concentrated abundantly in this room. "You've certainly touched those whom you intended to honor," Denton added.



Hooked on SOUTHCAM

Members of the Port of Miami Propeller Club listen to Brig. Gen. Jerry C. McAbee, U.S. Southern Command chief of staff, as he gives a command briefing Sept. 21 during the club's monthly meeting at the Miami Rod and Reel Club. The United States Propeller Club began in 1920, and represents the interests of American Flag Vessels and the American Merchant Marines. The club invited McAbee to talk about the command's mission, area of responsibility, assets and manpower, and impact the command has on the local community. (Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts)

Critical care team attempts life-saving evacuation in Bolivia

By Leigh Anne Redovian
Air Force Surgeon General Public Affairs

At 6 p.m. on Aug. 4, Lt. Col. (Dr.) James Henderson got word that he would be leading a Critical Care Aeromedical Transport Team, or CCATT, to Bolivia. The next afternoon he, along with a critical care nurse and a respiratory therapist, was on his way to Santa Cruz. Called by the Surgeon General of U.S. Southern Command, the team's mission was to assist a 40-year-old dependent wife critically ill in a Bolivian intensive care unit. The patient, a native of Bolivia, had been visiting her family in the area when a long-standing, pre-

viously stable disease took a turn for the worse.

Henderson, a critical care physician and fellowship director at the Sleep Disorders Center at Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, said such missions are part of the job, and he is always ready to go when called. Capt. Denise Roberts, a critical care nurse, and Staff Sgt. Michelle Parris, a respiratory therapist, accompanied the doctor on the mission.

According to Henderson, the local hospital's equipment had been outstripped by the situation and a local attempt to move the patient to a more advanced setting failed. By the time the

team arrived, the patient had been unstable for almost four days with oxygen levels well below normal — making for a dangerously rapid heart rate. The team partnered with local physicians to provide the constant, steady care needed to stabilize the patient for transport to the United States for treatment.

“Our Bolivian counterparts had done a very good job,” Henderson said. “However, they were limited by inferior diagnostic and therapeutic equipment, and were relatively inexperienced in managing difficult ventilator patients.”

(Editors Note: While the patient passed away 10 days after her safe return to the United States, a determined medical team overcame an austere working environment to successfully transport the patient to the United States for treatment at Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.)

See Care
Page 20

Care

from Page 19

Henderson stayed at the local hospital for a 54-hour stretch grabbing occasional one-to-two hour naps until the patient was stable for transfer. The team worked 16 hours on and eight hours off.

Once the patient's condition was stable, the team began planning the evacuation to Wilford Hall. The Global Patient Movement and Retrieval Center at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., arranged airlift capability for the



evacuation. The center later notified the team that military transport was not available but that a civilian air ambulance was on its way. Henderson admits the team was frustrated by not being able to transport the patient to the United

"These opportunities allow us to use our improvisational skills in delivering care. We learn how to use limited supplies and resources and how to work where communication is difficult."

Lt. Col. (Dr.) James Henderson
Critical care physician

States via a military aircraft. However, the team worked with the civilian aircrew to ensure the trip would go as smoothly as possible. Four days after the team arrived, the patient was successfully transferred to Wilford Hall, where

she remained in critical condition for 10 days until her unfortunate demise.

Of all of the challenges the team encountered on the mission, Henderson said the language barrier was the most difficult to work through.

"As long as an in-

terpreter was present, things went well," said the doctor. "We attempted to make sure one of the team was Spanish speaking, but the urgent nature of the trip made it impossible."

Henderson added that team members felt the trip was unique because typically on a CCATT mission the patient has no family in the area. Because the patient was in her homeland, all felt it was hard to keep a large enough profes-

See Care
Page 21

Care

from Page 20

sional distance from the patient's family.

Serving as the team's critical care nurse on her first international CCATT mission, Roberts said she couldn't help but become close to the family during the evacuation experience. For Roberts, the biggest challenge was rationing her medical supplies, because it was impossible to pinpoint when the evacuation would take place. She also said coordinating with local nurses proved challenging at times, because she had to ensure they were

not repeating the procedures she was performing.

"They had to understand what I was doing and why," Roberts said.

The trip to Bolivia was Henderson's fifth CCATT mission. He flew four previous in-country transports of critically ill patients and formerly served as the director of the CCATT program at Andrews AFB, Md. From his experience, he believes the capability allows the Air Force Medical Service to project into the new foreign relation's sphere of engage and enlarge.

"It can be about nation building, or as in this case, nation relations building," he said.

Prior to CCATT, the Air Force had no organized, mission-ready critical care transport services available.

"This lack of services required our forward echelon medical services to either abandon salvageable critical patients to death, or to so devote their time and resources to these few patients as to consume required resources from readily treatable troops with lesser injuries who may suffer as a result," Henderson said.

Today, the CCATT, which is designed to provide transport of critically ill, unstable patients to facilities where advanced medical care is available,

also allows interjection and projection of advanced lifesaving medical care into a close support area. The teams land and partner with those on the ground to stabilize and save lives. While these unique skills are required for wartime support, Henderson said it is logical that during peacetime, the AFMS should seek out areas of service that will prepare its people for their wartime roles.

"Usually, we practice our skills in controlled American hospitals with little logistical difficul-

See **Care**

Page 22

Care

from Page 21

ties,” Henderson said. “These opportunities allow us to use our improvisational skills in delivering care. We learn how to use limited supplies and resources and how to work where communication is difficult.”

Something as simple as learning how to convert equipment to 220 v / 50 hertz electricity as the team encountered in Bolivia may come in handy later, said the doctor.

While no return



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missions are planned — after he learns for the area, Spanish. Henderson said he “The physicians we met and worked

nately, Bolivia is so poor, we have no direct military ties, and the medical structure is so fragmented that a structured course opportunity is unlikely.”

With all of the challenges the team faced during the mission and its unfortunate outcome, Roberts remains optimistic about the future of CCATT missions.

“We showed that the military takes care of its families,” she said. “We gave the family our support, we brought her home, and in the end we did everything we could do.”

with there are hungry for education and collegial interaction,” he said. “Unfortu-

News briefs

Miami area tour

The Family Support Center is sponsoring its monthly Miami area tour 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Oct. 27. The tour is free to military personnel and their families. The tour begins and ends at the **Codina Building, Suite 110, at 8300 NW 33 Street**. For more information or to sign up for the tour, call **(305) 437-2665**.

Newcomers brief

The Family Support Center is sponsoring a newcomers briefing 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Oct. 20 at the Base Operations Education Center located at the

Codina Building, Suite 110, 8300 NW 33 Street. The briefing is the first Tuesday of every month.

The briefing includes presentations from the TRICARE representative; SOUTHCOM Health Clinic; Housing Office; Traffic Management Office; Education Office; Legal Office; Quality of Life Office; Morale, Welfare, and Recreation; DoD Police; and chaplain. For more information or to reserve your seat at the briefing, call **(305) 437-2667 or 2665**, or toll free at **(888) 547-4025**.

Smooth move

The Family Support

Center is sponsoring a Smooth Move briefing Oct. 17 from 9 to 11 a.m. at the **U.S. Southern Command Headquarters Conference Room 1401**. Call **(305) 437-2639** for more information or to sign up.

Legal Assistance

Call Army Staff Sgt. Brigitte Romain at **(305) 437-1303** or Suzanne Estes at **(305) 437-1304** to schedule legal assistance appointments.

TAP workshop

The next transition assistance program workshop is Oct. 17-20 at the **La**

Quinta Hotel, 8730 NW 27th Street. For more information or to sign up call **(305) 437-2671 or 2726**.

Sponsor training

The Family Support Center is providing sponsor training Oct. 24 at the **U.S. Southern Command Headquarters Conference Room 1401**. Call **(305) 437-2665** to sign up or for more information.

Pre-separation

There is a pre-separation briefing scheduled Oct.

See Briefs

Page 24

Briefs

from Page 23

11 from 2:30 to 4 p.m. at the **Codina Building, 8300 NW 33 Street, Suite 110**. The pre-separation briefing is a prerequisite for the transition assistance program briefing. Call the Family Support Center at **(305) 437-2665** to sign up or for more information.

Idaho Guard

The Idaho Air National Guard, in Boise Idaho, has part-time openings for 1COX1, 1C4X1, 2A1X1, 2A7X1,

2A6X1, 2FOX1, 2W1X1, 2T2X1, and more are available in many different career fields not listed. Call the Idaho Air National Guard toll free at **1-800-621-3909** or DSN **422-5383** or **5597**.

Stop violence

October is Domestic Violence Prevention Month. If you are a victim of abuse or suspect abuse, call the Family Support Center Family Advocacy Office at **(305) 437-2644**. Or visit **www.fvpf.org** for more information.

Family Support Center: first step for EFMP

What is EFMP?

The Exceptional Family Member Program helps active duty service members, who have exceptional family members, receive the maximum services that they are entitled to.

What is an Exceptional Family Member?

A family member (child or adult) with any temporary or permanent medical, physical, emotional, developmental, or intellectual condition or disability that requires special medical or educational treatment, follow-up, or counseling.

Why should I enroll in EFMP?

Enrolling in the program helps arrange for services that exceptional family members need before a military member moves to a new location. It's also mandatory.

How do I enroll in the program?

Just contact the Family Support Center at (305) 437-2665 to initiate the process. Your FSC can help with information and referral advocacy, links to support groups and respite care, and assistance with relocation.

If I enroll, will that affect my career?

Enrollment in the EFMP does not adversely affect promotion, schools or assignments. Personnel are still eligible for worldwide assignments.

Air Force surgery team bringing smiles to Hondurans

By Dewey Mitchell

Wilford Hall Medical Center Public Affairs

SOTO CANO AIR BASE, Honduras — They call her “Gabby” now, but only after U.S. Air Force surgeons fixed her smile.

Until she was a teenager, her parents had kept her inside the house except for trips to outdoor plumbing for fear that others would taunt her about her appearance, since she was born with a cleft lip. According to Col. (Dr.) Chuck Hardin, who performed the surgery, now she talks so much in the marketplace of



Photo by Dewey Mitchell

Milagro Flores recovers after surgery to repair her cleft lip. A nine-member plastic surgery team recently performed life-changing surgeries for indigent Honduran families at the Santa Teresa Public Health Hospital in Comayagua.

Comayagua, Honduras, people have nicknamed her “Gabby.”

Hardin is the senior member of a nine-member plastic surgery team that

has been performing life-changing surgeries for indigent Honduran families at the Santa Teresa public health hospital in Comayagua. U.S. Southern Command directed the mission. The command had received the request for aid from the U.S. Embassy in Honduras.

The medical team also brought a half-ton of medical supplies from Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. The medical team was made up of staff from Wilford Hall, Brooke Army

See Smiles
Page 26

Smiles

from Page 25

Medical Center — also in San Antonio — and Sheppard AFB hospital in Wichita Falls, Texas.

About half of the six million people of Honduras live below the poverty line, with an average annual income about \$2,400. The country's economy had been improving steadily until Hurricane Mitch hit it hard two years ago.

Staying in rooms at nearby Soto Cano Air Base, the team was supported by the Southern Command element at the base. Help included translators and physicians from the base who had advertised that the team was coming and screened potential patients. Only those deemed indigent would be seen by the highly specialized medical team.



Photo by Dewey Mitchell

Carlos Motino, 3, was scheduled for surgery during the first day screening to give his arm more movement. A fire when he was five months old left him severely burned. Maj. (Dr.) Lisa Desvigne prepares his identification band while his mother, Maria, comforts him.

Unlike many charitable medical teams, Army and Air Force teams have been coming here for

17 years, maintaining records on their patients and performing follow-up surgeries when needed.

Six of the nine medical staff had never deployed on a humanitarian mission, but all quickly took on the challenge of setting up an efficient operating room and recovery room under austere conditions at the hospital, which is not air conditioned. Meanwhile, surgeons and anesthesiologists screened more than 80 patients and selected 30 for surgery.

Juana Aguilar took the four-hour bus trip with her son and grandson from the mountain village of La Paz to Comayagua to make a better life for them. She had heard on the radio that the U.S. Air Force medical team would be working out of the Santa Teresa

See **Smiles**
Page 27

Smiles

from Page 26

hospital.

Her 2-year-old grandson, Francisco Galo, was born with a cleft lip, and her 11-year-old son, Manuel, needed surgery to close a hole in his palate.

She said she had a great deal of confidence in the team, since Manuel had undergone cleft lip and palate surgeries from previous teams starting at the age of eight. Without the medical teams, the family would not have been able to get the much-needed surgeries.

"I don't want our kids to grow up like this, and

I'm very thankful for the teams who come over here," Mrs. Aguilar said. "With the cleft lip, it's very hard to eat or drink or keep anything in your mouth. Also, when you get a cold, it's hard to get over it."

She explained that her family grows their own corn on their land, and their only income is made by mowing the grass for other farmers nearby.

One of the liaison physicians, Dr. Guillermo Saenz, estimated cleft lip surgery would cost about \$2,000 for Hondurans, but team chief Lt. Col. (Dr.) Greg Chandler said the team's cost per case is only \$500. Funding for



Milagro Flores looks a little nervous just prior to going into surgery, not wanting to leave the safety of her mother.

the mission comes from the U.S. State Department in the form of U.S. Aid.

Other types of surger-

ies performed by the team include severe burn inju-

See **Smiles**
Page 28

Smiles

from Page 27

ries and other congenital deformities. Two young boys had severe chest and neck burns, which restricted movement of their necks. Successful surgeries gave them much more mobility of movement.

A 3-year-old boy, Carlos Motino, had been badly burned as an infant when netting to keep flies out of his crib caught on fire and fell on him. One arm was severely burned and the burn area



Official photos

Surgeons performed surgery on Hondurans with severe burn injuries and other congenital deformities.

limited the movement of his arm.

The team's surgery "is the best thing that could happen in my life," said his mother, Maria. "He needs the movement of his arm."



Chandler, also a plastic surgeon, said many of the medical staff who deploy also find the humanitarian missions "life-changing" events for themselves as well as their patients. He

said most have never before seen first-hand the magnitude of poverty the teams encounter in some of the Central and South American nations.

"They come back with a greater appreciation for the quality of life that most Americans take for granted," he said.

After her first day of surgery, Maj. (Dr.) Lisa Desvigne said, "You really feel good about it because you know if it weren't for us, these people would never get the surgeries they so badly need."

The Air Force also benefits from these deployments. One major benefit is the training for plastic surgery residents like Desvigne, who can take part in a large number of surgeries over a relatively short period of time. Also in training on this mission is a resident anesthesiologist, Army Maj. (Dr.) Mike Gehrke, and scrub technician Senior Airman Linka Bucknor-Smartt.

Readiness train-

See Smiles
Page 29

Smiles

from Page 27

ing is another important benefit, as the plastic surgery team deployed as a unit with everything it needed in supplies, then set up and began operations in an austere, foreign environment. Team members had to get all their shots up to date, and were prescribed pills to prevent them from contracting malaria during their two-week stay.

In Honduras, the team had to improvise and deal with harsh conditions, including



the tropical heat, unexpected power outages, bottled water and unsanitary conditions.

“One of the best ben-

efits to the U.S. and the military has to be the goodwill we create with the surgeries through several generations

The day following surgery for cleft lips, toddlers (from left) Silvia Inestroza and Francisco Galo are held by their mother and grandmother, respectively, in the pediatric ward of Santa Teresa hospital. (Photo by Dewey Mitchell)

within the families of the patients,” Hardin said. “It’s a quality of life issue — when we repair a person’s deformity, it’s not just what it does for them, but also impacts how others will treat them.”

(AFNS)

Air Force members celebrate 53rd birthday, look to future



The theme for this year's Air Force Ball was "Wings over the Americas" to honor the U.S. Southern Command. It epitomizes ready force and total force.



(Above) Maj. Gen. James N. Soligan, J-5 director, presents a symbolic check representing money raised to support local ROTC, Junior AFROTC and Civil Air Patrol units for use in aerospace education, training, activities and assistance.



(Right) Air Force Master Sgt. Garrett Edmond and wife Cotena enjoy the festivities.



(Left) Steve Bayner hypnotizes audience participants during the event's entertainment.



(Above & right) Air Force Maj. Gen. James N. Soligan, J-5 Strategy, Policy, and Plans Directorate director, speaks on behalf of the U.S. Southern Command at the Air Force Ball Sept. 23 at the Radisson Mart Plaza Hotel in Miami.



Our great nation understands, appreciates sacrifices we make

By Lt. Col. Dave Henderson
384th Air Refueling Squadron
director of operations

MCCONNELL AIR FORCE BASE, Kan. (AFPN) — Recently, I attended a military funeral and during the service I reflected. Why is it, 40 years after a veteran has left the military, people so strongly remember that this individual served his country?

I can remember when World War II veterans from my local community died, and for each one there is as much in their obituary about their military service as for the other 60 or more years of



their life. How can it be that these people are remembered so much for what ultimately was a relatively few years of their life?

I think the answer is sacrifice. By the very fact they were veterans, these people gave some period of their lives for the good of this nation. They didn't all give the same. Some answered the call during a time of crisis,

while others spent an entire career in the military. Some maintained, some operated, some administered. Some supplied the bullets to the front, some fired the bullets across the front, some didn't return from the front. All answered the call.

Consider these honored veterans, and think about what you are doing now.

Perhaps you think you simply go to the office or the flightline and put in your 12 hours. Or perhaps you look ahead to the day when you can make the transition back to civilian life. Either way, don't miss the here and now.

Each day, we all live an adventure. Sure, it may sound like a commercial, but think about it. How many of your old friends from back home are dealing with millions of dollars worth of equipment every day? How many of them can say if

See **Sacrifice**
Page 31

Sacrifice

from Page 30

they don't get their job done exactly right, someone else may pay the price with their life? And who among them can say that what they do provides security for an entire country? How many of them can say they lived away from their loved ones for months on end because it was important to the well being of the nation? And how many of your peers do you believe have thought about the

possibility they could give their life in the course of doing their job?

There are some. Certainly police and firefighters provide our communities

with protection and certainly they risk their lives, but military members do this on the grand scale — for the whole.

Someone actu-



ally does think about your sacrifices — our grateful nation that so readily honors our veterans. It is precisely because many people have pondered these sacrifices that veterans are remembered so much for their service, even 40 or 50 years after they have left active duty. At the military funeral I was thinking, here lies a man who put his life on the line to protect us all. Was he any braver than the rest? Maybe, maybe not. But when this country had a tough job to do, there is no

doubt that he stood and said, "I'll do it."

Whether you realize it or not, you are that person, right now, right here.

You have said, "I'll go to the far corners of the earth. I'll endure long separations from my loved ones." You ask little in return considering what you give this nation.

To you it may seem like any other job, but your country will remember your sacrifices for all of your days. You have, in essence, stood and said, I'll do it.

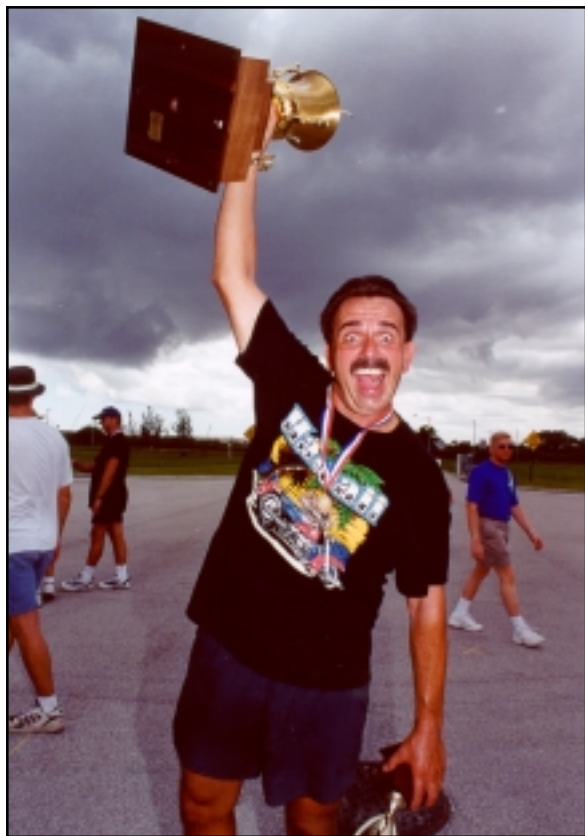


Photo by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts
Air Force Master Sgt. George Sniffen, J-5 Directorate, hoists the Commander's Cup, declaring victory for the J-4/J-5 combined team.

J-4, J-5 captures first Commander's Cup

MIAMI -- The combined J-4/J-5 Division team captured the U.S. Southern Command Field Day Commander's Cup here Aug. 31 when they defeated the J-3 and J-2 teams in a tie-breaking tug-of-war contest. Each team finished the day with 17 total team points after competing in 3-on-3 basketball; volleyball; closest-to-the-pin golf shot; tug of war; punt, pass and kick competition; water balloon toss, and a four-person relay race.

Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, commander in chief, presented Maj. Gen. James N. Soligan, J-5 director, the Commander's Cup during an award ceremony following the day's activities. He also recognized the various activity winners.

The entire command participated at the command's first annual field day, and everyone enjoyed hamburgers and hot dogs during a cookout. A DJ provided music throughout the event.

(See more photos on page 34)



Several players go for a rebound during the 3-on-3 basketball tournament, one of the competitions held during the U.S. Southern Command Field Day Aug. 31.

The results

Overall scoreboard

1. J-4/J-5 (17 points) *
2. J-2 (17 points)
2. J-3 (17 points)
3. J-6/ASA (9 points)
4. CMD GP/SP Staff (4 points)
5. J-1/J-8 (0 points)

* Won three-way tie break



(Above) U.S. Southern Command members line up to enjoy the cookout.



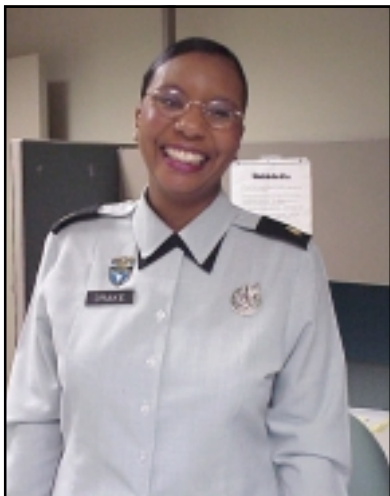
(Above) Participants enjoy hamburgers and hot dogs. (Left) Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm makes sure no team has an advantage at tug of war.



Navy Lt. Carlos Plasas, a member of the Command Group and Support Staff team, hits the volleyball during the field day. (Photos by Air Force Tech. Sgt. Lee Roberts)

(Left) Maj. George Woodard laughs even though his J-6/ASA team faced defeat in the tug of war competition.

Sgt. Sonya Felicia Drake



Service:

U.S. Army

Organization:

J-3 Operations Directorate Operations Division

Duty title:

Administration NCO

Time in service: 13 years

Hometown:

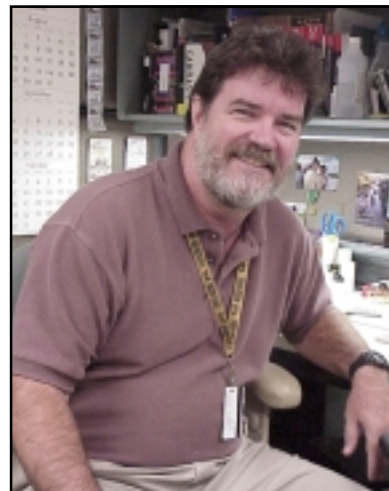
Aulander, N.C.

Hobbies: Cooking, reading, spending time with family

Favorite duty station: Headquarters, SHAPE, Belgium

Career Highlights: Working briefly for Gen. John M. Shalikashvili before his appointment to chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and completion of the United States Army Recruiting Course.

Tom Pattison



Service:

Civil Service

Organization:

Army Signal Activity

Duty title:

Visual information specialist

Time in service:

20 years

Hometown: Curundu (Canal Zone), Panama

Hobbies: Music, food and travel

Favorite duty station: Ft. Clayton, Panama

Career Highlights: Working for Tropic Test Center in the early 1980s and seeing military equipment in use today that were prototypes then; having had the opportunity to work with some very talented people; and being part of the creative team that designed the "Just Cause" exhibit for USARSO that was displayed in Washington D.C.



Photo by Army Spc. Lucy J. Pabon

End of tour medal

Brig. Gen. Gary D. Speer (Right), U.S. Southern Command deputy commander in chief, presents the Defense Meritorious Service Medal to Army Master Sgt. Kiki Bryant, the command's first sergeant, during an end-of-tour award ceremony Aug. 30 at the Thurman Building Main Conference Room.



Photo by Army Spc. Lucy J. Pabon

Retirement ceremony

Maj. Gen. Alfred Valenzuela, commander of U.S. Army South, presents the Defense Meritorious Service Medal Sept. 8 to Army Sgt. 1st Class Miriam Lopez, Base Operations, during a retirement ceremony at the Thurman Building Main Conference Room. Lopez' husband Alex, son Joshua, 9, mother Guillermina Lopez and sister Wanda Lopez from Bayamon, Puerto Rico, sister Carmen Lopez and niece Nereissa, 10, from Miami attended the ceremony.

Senior service college

Congratulations to the following Army lieutenant colonels who were recently on the senior service college selection list:

- Joseph Contarino, Ecuador
- Joseph F. Napoli, SCCC
- Felix L. Santiagotorres, Peru
- Raymond Duncan Jr., J-4
- Charles H. King, SCEN

New commanders

Congratulations to the following Coast Guard lieutenant commanders who were recently selected for promotion to the rank of commander:

- Mike Scully, CG LNO
- Howard White, DOMREP
- Mike McKenna, JIATF-E
- Christina Simington, J-2

Navy promotion

Congratulations to Navy Lt.

Tabitha Stewardt, Barbados MILGRP, who was recently selected for promotion to lieutenant commander.

Colonel command

Congratulations to the following Marine Corps colonels who were recently selected to command:

- Allen Coulter, J-4
- James J. Cooney, J-3
- Anthony W. Valentino, J-5

Quarterly winners

Congratulations to the following individuals who were recently selected as winners during the Enlisted Persons of the Quarter Board for the third quarter of 2000:

Senior board winner:

Staff Sgt. Robert J. Battle, J-2

Junior board winner:

Spc. Michael P. Haynes, ASA

Army promotions

Congratulations to the following Army staff sergeants who were recently selected for promotion to the rank of sergeant first class:

- William Cotter, J-2
- Thomas A. Schubert, J-2
- Stanley L. Watson, J-2
- Eric B. Turner, J-2
- George R. Wisdom, SOCSO

New first sergeant

Congratulations to the U.S. Southern Command's new first sergeant, Ernest Sosa, who was promoted to the Army rank of master sergeant by Col. Mark Christian, the J-2 Joint Intelligence Center commander, during a ceremony Wednesday at the Thurman Building Main Conference Room. Sosa recently took over as first sergeant from Army Master Sgt. Kiki Bryant, who left the command for a new assignment.



Job well done

Gen. Peter Pace (Left), U.S. Southern Command commander in chief, congratulates and gives his CINC coin Sept. 20 to a Peruvian soldier for his efforts during Cabañas 2000. The SOUTHCOM-sponsored multinational peacekeeping exercise, which ran from Sept. 6-20, involved civilian and military agencies from Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and the United States. (Photo by Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Gabe Puello)